

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 171250Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2589

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1401

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AG

SUBJECT: WHAT ARE ALGERIANS UP TO?

1. CURIOUS SURFACE LASSITUDE APPEARS TO HAVE TEMPORARILY
SETTLED OVER ALGERIAN LEADERSHIP.

2. INTERNATIONAL ISSUES ABOUND, BUT ALGERIANS APPEAR TO BE
REACTING TO THEM RATHER THAN TAKING CHARGE. BOUTEFLIKA'S
INTERMINABLE TOUR OF GULF STATES APPEARED TO BE HALF-HEARTED,
AIMLESS MISSION POSSIBLY DESIGNED TO KEEP HIM OUT OF ALGIERS.
SPANISH SAHARA ISSUES, WHILE IMPORTANT TO ALGERIANS, HAVE
STIMULATED LESS HEAT LOCALLY THAN MIGHT BE EXPECTED.
GOA RESPONSE TO SECRETARY'S IEA/OECD PROPOSALS NOT IN YET.
RABIN'S US TRIP, FORD-SADAT SALZBURG MEETING, PENING OF
SUEZ AND ISRAELI PULLBACK HAVE RECEIVED OCCASIONAL SNARLS,
BUT ALGERIANS DO NOT APPEAR TO BE FOCUSING ON ME ISSUES.
BOUMEDIENE'S OWN GULF SWING HAS BEEN POSTPONED SEVERAL TIMES.
MADAME BINH LANGUISHED HERE FOR OVER TEN DAYS, VIRTUALLY
IGNORED BY PRESS; SHE FINALLY GOT TO SIGN TWO APPARENTLY
ROUTINE ACCORDS WITH ABDESSELAM. ALGERIANS RECOGNIZING
SOME OF SYMPTOMS OF THEIR CURRENT FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES
BUT NO SIGN YET THEY PREPARED TO TAKE MAJOR STEPS.

3. MANY EXPLANATIONS POSSIBLE. EVERYONE, EVEN THE
APPARENTLY INDEFATIGABLE ALGERIANS, NEEDS REST FROM TIME
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TO TIME. DOMESTIC EVENTS HAVE BEEN NEEDING ATTENTION.

TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF BOUMEDIENE'S OVERTHROW OF BEN BELLA COMING UP JUNE 19, AND THIS REQUIRING PLANNING AND PREEMPTING ATTENTION. FAMILIAR SPECULATION ABOUT IMMINENT GOVERNMENT SHAKEUP RESURFACING FOR UMPTEENTH TIME; ONE OF THESE DAYS IT WILL COME TRUE. FINANCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL WOES AND YOUTH AND LABOR DIFFICULTIES CREATING CONCERN AND PRESUMABLY OCCUPYING SOME ATTENTION.

4. YET WE CAN NOT RESIST SUSPICION THAT APPARENT ALGERIAN NEGLECT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS ISSUES IS NOT BENIGN AND THAT COMPARATIVE SILENCE INDICATES NOT REST OR INTERNAL REFOCUS BUT PLOTTING. ALGERIAN APPETITE FOR INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT TOO WHETTED AND ITS STARRING ROLE HAS BECOME TOO KEY AN INTERNAL FACTOR TO LET IT SLIDE BY. AT MINIMUM, ALGERIANS WILL AGAIN FORCEFULLY SEEK LDC/THIRD WORLD LEADERSHIP ROLE AT SEVENTH UNSS AND AT ANY NEW PREPCON. SILENCE NOW MAY SIMPLY REFLECT INTERNAL PLANNING ON HOW THEY CAN MAINTAIN DOMINATION OF THEIR RADICAL CONFRONTATION POLICIES AT TIME WHEN OTHERS ARE EMPHASIZING NEED FOR CAREFULLY PREPARED PRAGMATIC SOLUTIONS. IN ANY CASE WE LIKELY TO BE HEARING FROM THEM SHORTLY.LYNE

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